crores is loan). An amount of Rs.9730.48 crores (including counter-part funding) has been utilized. More than 50% works have been completed in about 150 projects. This programme is continuing in 2006-07 also.

Power Minister's visit to Japan

1434. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Minister of Power visited Japan in the third week of June, 2006.

(b) if so, the outcome of the visit; and

(c) the details of agreements and understanding reached with Japan during his visit?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A delegation led by Shri Sushil kumar Shinde, Hon'ble Minister of Power visited Japan during June 22-27,2006 to show case the Indian Power Sector as an attractive investment destination. The delegation held various interactive meeting with the Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Government of Japan, Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and leading trading, financial and power sector companies.

(c) There was overwhelming response to the interactive meeting held in Japan, in which almost all major power sector companies representatives at very senior level participated. The participant had shown keen interest in the Indian power sector investment opportunities, especially the Ultra Mega Power Projects. However, no agreement or understanding was reached between two governments during this visit.

Monarchak gas based power project

1435. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an all-party delegation met the Hon'ble Minister about two months back demanding a revision of Government decision to abandon the Monarchak gas based power project in Tripura; and

(b) if so, the details of the steps taken by Government to resume the construction work of the project soon?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(b) Due to non-availability of gas for Monarchak Gas Based Power Project (280 MW) and in view of the advantages of economy of scale in the setting up of Palatana Project (750 MW) also in Tripura, it has not been found feasible to take up the Monarchak GBPP as originally planned.

Backlog vacancies of SC/ST

1436. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of backlog vacancies of SC and ST, group-wise as on the 1st July, 2004;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Hon'ble Prime Minister had issued instructions to fill up such vacancies on or before December, 2005;

(c) if so, the action taken by the Ministry in this regard;

(d) the details of vacancies filled in during special drive; and

(e) the details of vacancies in balance on the 30th June, 2006, group-wise?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE): (a) Group-wise details of backlog vacancies reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Ministry of Power, its Attached Office, Autonomous Bodies and Public Sector Undertakings under its administrative control, as on 1st July, 2004, are given below:

		Number of Backlog Reserved Vacancies Group									
		A	Group B	Group C		Group D		Total			
				SC				ST			
1.	Ministry of Power and Attached Office (Central Electricity Authority)	Nil	2	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	2
2.	Autonomous Bodies under the Ministry of Power	29	23	18	22	24	13	2	13	73	71
3.	Public Sector Undertakings under the Ministry of Power	15	80	1	4	25	14	8	Nil	49	98
4.	TOTAL:	44	106	19	26	49	27	10	13	122	171